



from the South Carolina Education Oversight Committee
P.O. Box 11867 • Room 227 Blatt Building
Columbia, South Carolina, 29211
Communications Office, (803) 734-6164 • Dana Yow
www.sceoc.org

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EOC subcommittee votes to defer decision on indicators within biology content standards

Columbia – At its meeting today, members of the Academic Standards and Assessments (ASA) Subcommittee of the South Carolina Education Oversight Committee (EOC) voted to defer decision on four indicators included within a biology content standard. Subcommittee members further specified two members of the subcommittee to work with the State Department of Education on the specific language within the indicators.

The four indicators originally extracted by the committee for further study on December 12, 2005, are included within Standard B-5, which demonstrate students' ability to "demonstrate an understanding of biological evolution and the diversity of life," and include:

- B-5.2 Explain how genetic processes result in the continuity of life-forms over time.
- B-5.4 Explain how genetic variability and environmental factors lead to biological evolution.
- B-5.5 Exemplify scientific evidence in the fields of anatomy, embryology, biochemistry, and paleontology that underlies the theory of biological evolution.
- B-5.7 Use a phylogenetic tree to identify the evolutionary relationships among different groups of organisms.

The decision came after nearly three hours of discussion. Subcommittee members heard from four panelists: Mary Lang Edwards, Professor of Biology, Erskine College; Rebecca Keller, President of Gravitas Publications, Incorporated; Karen Straton, science/health coordinator for Lexington School District One; and Richard M. von Sternberg, Staff Scientist, National Institutes of Health.

The two individuals from the ASA subcommittee designated to work with the State Department of Education are Rep. Bob Walker and Wally Hall, an educator appointee to the EOC.

Earlier in the day, the ASA subcommittee approved revisions to the calculation of high school and primary school ratings, as well as proposed changes to the School and District Report Card profile information related to off-grade level testing and foreign-language instruction.

Established by the EAA, the EOC is an independent, non-partisan, 18-member legislative committee made up of educators, business persons, and elected officials who serve by virtue of their elected position or by appointment of the legislature or governor. It bears responsibilities for the development and improvement of SC's educational accountability system and for making recommendations to ensure the continuous improvement of schools.

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